

~From the Administrator~

Dear Parish Family,

May 2, 2010

Congratulations to our students who received their First Holy Communion this weekend at the Sunday 10:30 am Mass. Please continue to pray for them as they experience the manifold graces of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Thank you to our Mission Co-op couple who presented before and after all of the weekend Masses. Please be generous in your support of the good works of the *Foundation for Children in Need* in India.

You may have noticed the tables set up in the gathering area as we move forward with our pictorial directory. Sign up for your photo session before or after any of the weekend Masses. Photos will be taken during June. If you have any photos that may be useful of events at our parish over the past few years, please drop the photos off at the office. You may also drop off a storage device with digital photos, or send a JPEG file to the parish email address stjosephtheworker@msn.com

The month of May is dedicated to devotions to Our Lady. The four Marian dogmas of the Church (and the years they were declared) are: Mary's title as the Mother of God (431); Mary's perpetual virginity (3rd century Creed); Mary's Immaculate Conception (1854); Mary's Assumption at the end of her life (1950).

On Thursday, May 6, after the 8:00 am Mass, we will have a May Crowning and Procession around the church (outdoors if weather permits.) The students at our school will take part in this event to honor Our Blessed Mother. All who would like to participate please assemble in the gathering area of the church following the morning liturgy (~8:45 am).

In a further effort to honor Our Lady during the month of May, I would like to encourage the praying of the Rosary before all of the liturgies beginning this next week. In order to accommodate the praying of the Rosary as well as a suitable time for silence immediately before Mass, we will attempt to start praying the Rosary approximately 30 minutes before Mass.

Let us continue to support each other with our prayers – especially invoking Our Lady's intercession during the month of May. See you at church, or on the playground! God bless you!

Fr. David

WORD OF THE WEEK: PERSEVERANCE

1. A moral virtue by which someone continues in performing a good act despite difficulties encountered;
2. A virtue connected with Fortitude;
3. Final Perseverance: The grace of continuing to death in the state of sanctifying grace; it may last many years, or have begun only a short time before death.

May: The Month of Mary

Month of Mary

The month of May is the “month which the piety of the faithful has especially dedicated to Our Blessed Lady,” and it is the occasion for a “moving tribute of faith and love which Catholics in every part of the world [pay] to the Queen of Heaven. During this month Christians, both in church and in the privacy of the home, offer up to Mary from their hearts an especially fervent and loving homage of prayer and veneration. In this month, too, the benefits of God’s mercy come down to us from her throne in greater abundance”

This Christian custom of dedicating the month of May to the Blessed Virgin arose at the end of the 13th century. In this way, the Church was able to Christianize the secular feasts which were wont to take place at that time. In the 16th century, books appeared and fostered this devotion.

The practice became especially popular among the members of the Jesuit Order — by 1700 it took hold among their students at the Roman College and a bit later it was publicly practiced in the Gesu Church in Rome. From there it spread to the whole Church.

The practice was granted a partial indulgence by Pius VII in 1815 and a plenary indulgence by Pius IX in 1859. With the complete revision of indulgences in 1966 and the decreased emphasis on specific indulgences, it no longer carries an indulgence; however it certainly falls within the category of the First General Grant of Indulgences. (A partial indulgence is granted to the faithful who, in the performance of their duties and in bearing the trials of life, raise their mind with humble confidence to God, adding — even if only mentally — some pious invocation.

The Month of Mary and the Popes

The pious practice of honoring Mary during the month of May has been especially recommended by the Popes. Pius XII made frequent reference to it and in his great Encyclical on the Sacred Liturgy, *Mediator Dei*, characterized it as one of “other exercises of piety which although not strictly belonging to the Sacred Liturgy, are nevertheless of

special import and dignity, and may be considered in a certain way to be an addition to the liturgical cult: they have been approved and praised over and over again by the Apostolic See and by the Bishops”.

Paul VI wrote a short encyclical in 1965 using the Month of Mary devotion as a means of obtaining prayers for peace. He urged the faithful to make use of this practice which is “gladdening and consoling” and by which the Blessed Virgin Mary is honored and the Christian people are enriched with spiritual gifts.

In May of 2002 Pope John Paul II said, “Today we begin the month dedicated to Our Lady a favorite of popular devotion. In accord with a long-standing tradition of devotion, parishes and families continue to make the month of May a ‘Marian’ month, celebrating it with many devout liturgical, catechetical and pastoral initiatives!”

Devotion to Mary

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of the Church and therefore the example, as well as the guide and inspiration, of everyone who, in and through the Church, seeks to be the servant of God and man and the obedient agent of the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, as Pope Leo XIII reminded us, is the soul of the Church: All the activity and service of the members of the Church, beginning with the supreme participation of the Blessed Mother in the work of the Church, is vivified by the Holy Spirit as the body, in all its activities, is vivified by its soul. The Holy Spirit is the Paraclete, Advocate, and Comforter which Christ Himself sent to be our consolation in the sorrowful mysteries of life, our source of moderation in the joyful mysteries of life, our added principle of exaltation in the glorious mysteries of life.

So He was for the Blessed Mother; so also He is for the least of us; so also He is for the rest of the Church, even for those who are its unconscious but conscientious members.

Wherever there is faith there is the example of Mary, because she lived by faith as the Scriptures remind us.

If, then, piety is the virtue which binds us to the sources of all life, to God, to our parents, to the Church, to Christ, certainly Christian piety binds us, in grateful love, to Mary — or our acceptance of Christ and of the mystery of our kinship with Him is imperfect, partial, and unfulfilled.

Mary and Our Spiritual Life

In our observance of the Marian month we should take into account the season of the Liturgical Year which largely corresponds with the fifty days of Easter. Our pious exercises could emphasize Our Lady’s participation in the Paschal mystery and in Pentecost with which the Church begins. The pious exercises connected with the month of May can easily highlight the earthly role played by the glorified Queen of Heaven, here and now, in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

The Regina Caeli and the Angelus

The ecclesial community addresses this antiphon to Mary for the Resurrection of her Son and throughout the year. It adverts to, and depends on, the invitation to joy addressed by Gabriel to the Lord’s humble servant who was called to become the Mother of the saving Messiah.

The Rosary

Also called the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Rosary is one of the most excellent prayers to the Mother of God. Thus, “the Roman Pontiffs have repeatedly exhorted the faithful to the frequent recitation of this biblically inspired prayer which is centered on contemplation of the salvific events of Christ’s life, and their close association with the Virgin Mother.”

The Litany of Loretto

The Litany of the Blessed Virgin — also called the Litany of Loreto — is one of the many Marian litanies, or praises of Mary, composed during the Middle Ages. The place of honor it now holds, in the life of the Church, is due its faithful use at the shrine of the Holy House at Loreto, which, according to tradition, was the small cottage-like home where the Holy Family had lived and which was miraculously transported by angels, in 1291, from the Holy Land to its present location in Loreto.